



## **Ubuntu Linux - the crunchy bits!**

The "How to" you struggled to find

Albert van Aardt ©

Released under the Creative Commons License - Attribution



January 2010

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
1. Configuring a Dial-Up Connection in Ubuntu.....	4
1.1. Configuring a Dial-Up Connection using Networking option.....	4
1.2. Alternative Way 1 (using wvdialconf & wvdial).....	7
1.3. Configuring a Dial-Up Connection using pppconfig.....	8
3. Making Ubuntu work through a corporate Windows IIS proxy server.....	20
5. How to set file / application associations in Gnome.....	23
6. Installing Internet Explorer on Linux.....	23
7. Hidden files/ folders.....	24
9. Set Windows as Default OS when Dual Booting Ubuntu .....	25
11. Simple single user firewall.....	26
12. "But it doesn't look like Windows!".....	27
13. Running MS Office 2000 under Linux with Wine.....	27
14. "I cannot see my USB memory stick!".....	28
15. How to save BBC news clips as MPEG movies.....	28
16. How to back up MSOffice / Internet Explorer running under Wine on Linux. ....	29
17. VMWare Player does not use USB 2.0??.....	29
18. Using the floppy drive.....	29
29. Set default directories (e.g. for pictures / downloads / screen saver).....	29
19. How to forcefully create a desktop shortcut on a user's desktop.....	30
20. Set up an auto shutdown feature.....	32
21. How to generate and send emails from Python.....	33
22. Help! My task bars are gone!.....	34
23. Python documentation .....	35
24. Installing new fonts on Ubuntu.....	35
25. Running a program in a terminal using a desktop shortcut.....	36
26. How to install the latest version of OpenOffice.org.....	36
27. How to extend Nautilus with shell scripts.....	36
Appendix A. Useful links.....	37
Appendix B. OpenOffice FAQ's.....	37
Changing Page Orientation in OpenOffice.....	37
Setting up the spell checker.....	40
Set document default file format.....	41

## **Introduction.**

This guide is the result of questions frequently asked to myself and other Linux cognoscenti. Although it is true that there are numerous web sites with lots of information, newcomers often struggle to get their modems to connect to the Internet, let alone browse web sites. After all, if one cannot get onto the Internet one cannot look for help!

A LOT of the information was scraped of the Internet; where I could, I have acknowledge the original authors. However, it was not always possible. If there is any copyrighted material included here, my apologies. Let me know and I will remove it. (lnxrlz007@gmail.com)

.

# 1. Configuring a Dial-Up Connection in Ubuntu

Ubuntu includes some useful utilities to get your dial-up connection up and running. Here are a number of ways you can connect to your dial-up connection.

## Before Starting

Before configuring Dial-up connection you need to have the following information from your ISP

- 1)Username
- 2>Password
- 3)Dail-in number

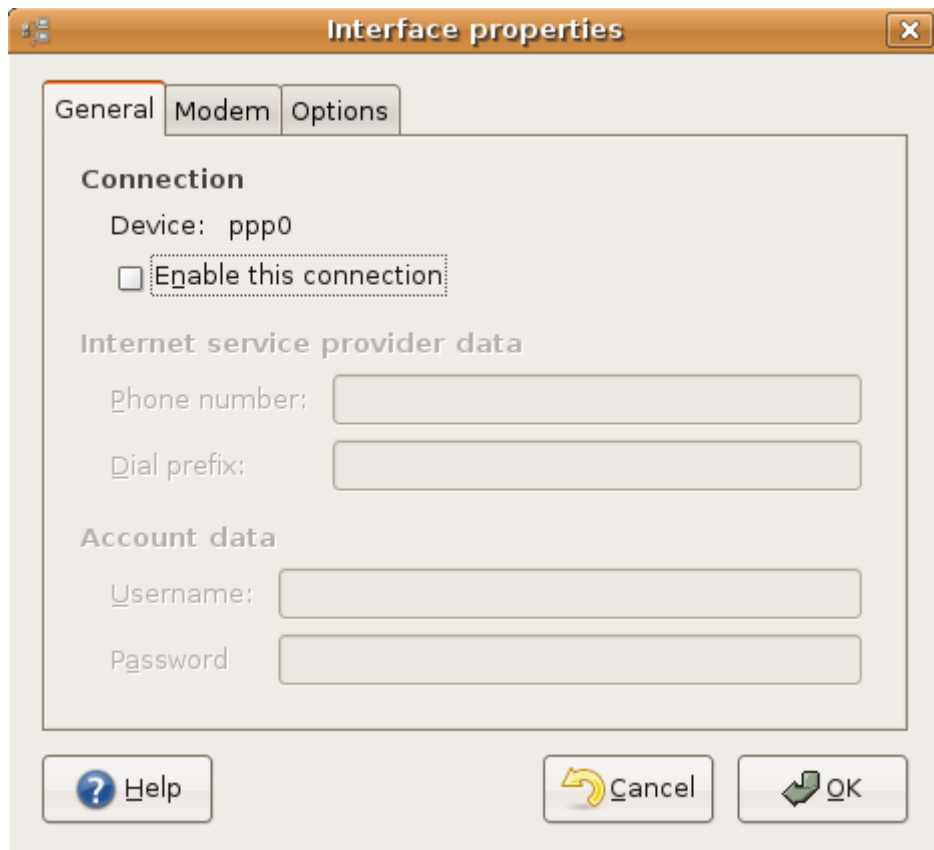
## 1.1. Configuring a Dial-Up Connection using Networking option

you can go to System—>Administration —>Networking

Once it open the application you should see the following screen



In the above screen select modem connection option and click on properties you should see the following screen

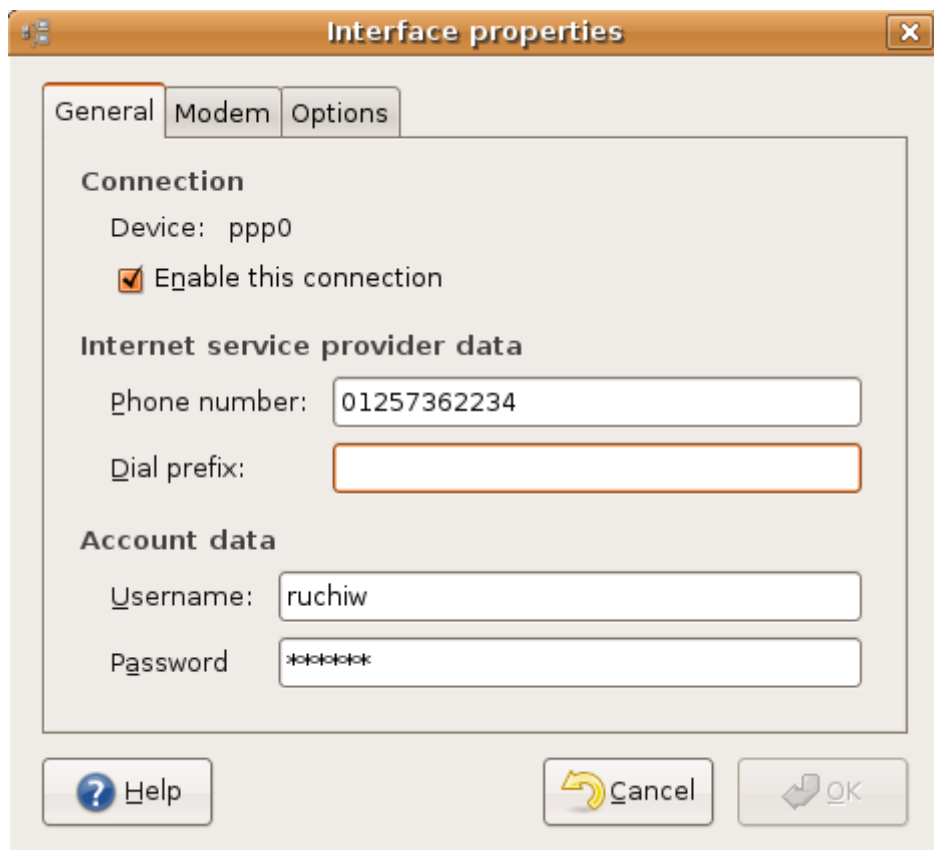


The image shows a window titled "Interface properties" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. It has three tabs: "General", "Modem", and "Options". The "General" tab is selected. Inside the "General" tab, there are three sections: "Connection", "Internet service provider data", and "Account data".

- Connection**
  - Device: ppp0
  - ☐ Enable this connection
- Internet service provider data**
  - Phone number:
  - Dial prefix:
- Account data**
  - Username:
  - Password:

At the bottom of the dialog, there are three buttons: a "Help" button with a question mark icon, a "Cancel" button with a yellow curved arrow icon, and an "OK" button with a green checkmark icon.

The first thing you will need to do is to enable the connection by ticking the Enable this connection box, now you need enter your ISP's phone number as well as your username and password

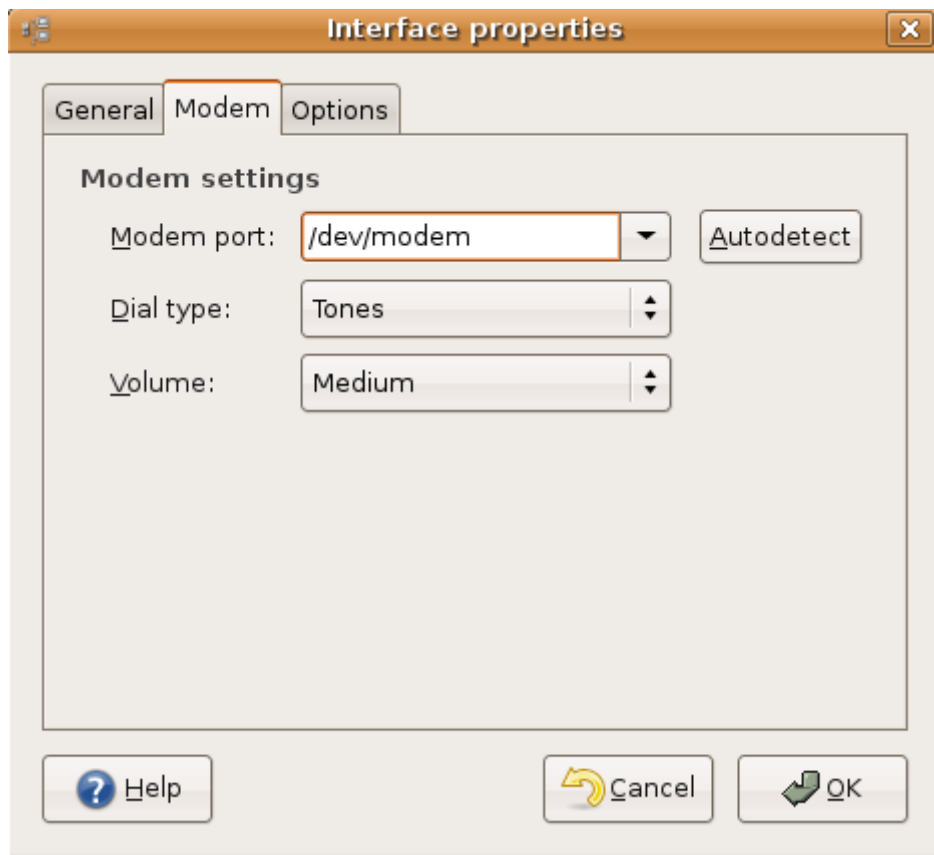


This image shows the same "Interface properties" dialog box, but with the "Enable this connection" checkbox checked and the input fields filled with data.

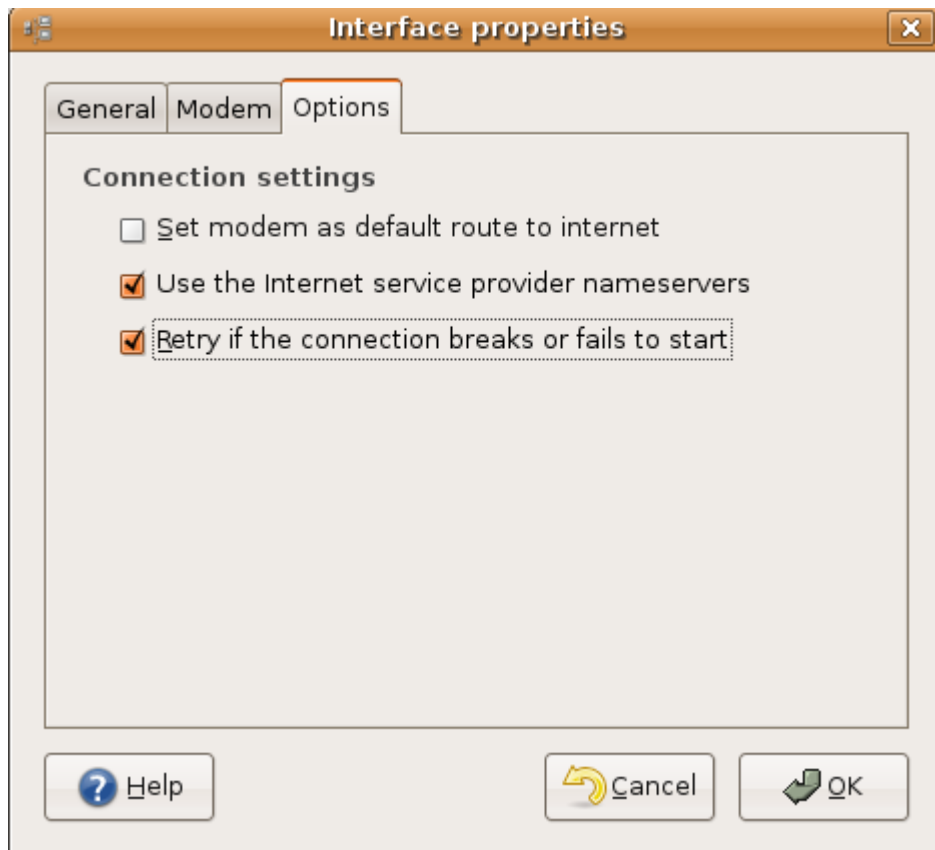
- Connection**
  - Device: ppp0
  - ☒ Enable this connection
- Internet service provider data**
  - Phone number: 01257362234
  - Dial prefix:
- Account data**
  - Username: ruchiw
  - Password: \*\*\*\*\*

The buttons at the bottom remain the same: "Help", "Cancel", and "OK".

Next, click on the modem tab to specify details about your modem and also configure the speaker volume. Most telephone systems use tone dialling nowadays, so make sure this is selected . I have selected the speaker volume on medium.



Now you need to click on options tab If you are using a laptop then you will probably want to uncheck Set modem as default route to the Internet whilst you are on a LAN, otherwise you may struggle to see anything! Tick it when you are expecting to use your dial-up connection though, and Ubuntu will use this connection to get out onto the Internet. You need to select other two options checked.



Now You can use the Gnome Modem Monitor and Network Monitor panel if you want to stop, start and monitor modem connections.

<https://help.ubuntu.com/community/DialupModemHowto>

## **1.2. Alternative Way 1 (using wvdialconf & wvdial)**

Type in a terminal

```
sudo wvdialconf /etc/wvdial.conf
```

If it says 'no modem found' or something similar, sorry... the driver for your modem seems not to be installed properly yet. The lack of a /dev/modem is not supposed to break wvdial's configuration. If the modem is found, finish the setup with:

```
sudo gedit /etc/wvdial.conf
```

After opening the wvdial.conf file, input your ISP information where needed (look inside the file for fields) and add other options that might be needed for your software modem. You will know what these options are if you asked for help from linmodems.org mailing list. Examples options that you

can try to add, if dialling does not work:

- add X3 to Init2 (means dial without waiting)
- add Carrier Check = no as a new line (useful for Smartlink modems)
- add Stupid mode = on as a new line (will start pppd immediately--required by some ISPs)

Typing `man wvdial.conf` in a separate terminal will give details on options.

Once you are ready, save the file (Ctrl-o) and exit (Ctrl-x), and try to dial:

```
sudo wvdial
```

will dial and connect. Upon connection, it will spit out some information about your connection (local IP, remote IP, DNS address, etc.). Do **not** close the terminal where wvdial is running. Leave it alone until you want the connection to be terminated, and hit CTRL+C on that terminal once you want to end the connection.

If you lose the connection a short time after connecting (30 sec - 3 min), you might need to edit options for pppd:

```
sudo gedit /etc/ppp/options
```

Find `lcp-echo-interval30` and `lcp-echo-failure4`. Comment out these options by adding a '#' at the start of these lines, eg. `# lcp-echo-interval30` and `# lcp-echo-failure4`.

If you connect successfully but your Internet applications do not function (eg. web pages do not load in Firefox), you might need to add `replacedefaultroute` as a new line in the pppd option file.

### **1.3. Configuring a Dial-Up Connection using pppconfig**

Open a terminal from Applications > System Tools > Terminal and type

```
sudo pppconfig
```

Now you should see the following screen here you need to select "Create Create a connection" select ok and press enter



```
| Main Menu |
This is the PPP configuration utility. It does not connect to your isp:
just configures ppp so that you can do so with a utility such as pon. It
will ask for the username, password, and phone number that your ISP gave
you. If your ISP uses PAP or CHAP, that is all you need. If you must use
a chat script, you will need to know how your ISP prompts for your
username and password. If you do not know what your ISP uses, try PAP.
Use the up and down arrow keys to move around the menus. Hit ENTER to
select an item. Use the TAB key to move from the menu to <OK> to <CANCEL>
and back. To move on to the next menu go to <OK> and hit ENTER. To go
back to the previous menu go to <CANCEL> and hit enter.

Create Create a connection
Change Change a connection
Delete Delete a connection
Quit Exit this utility

<Ok>
```

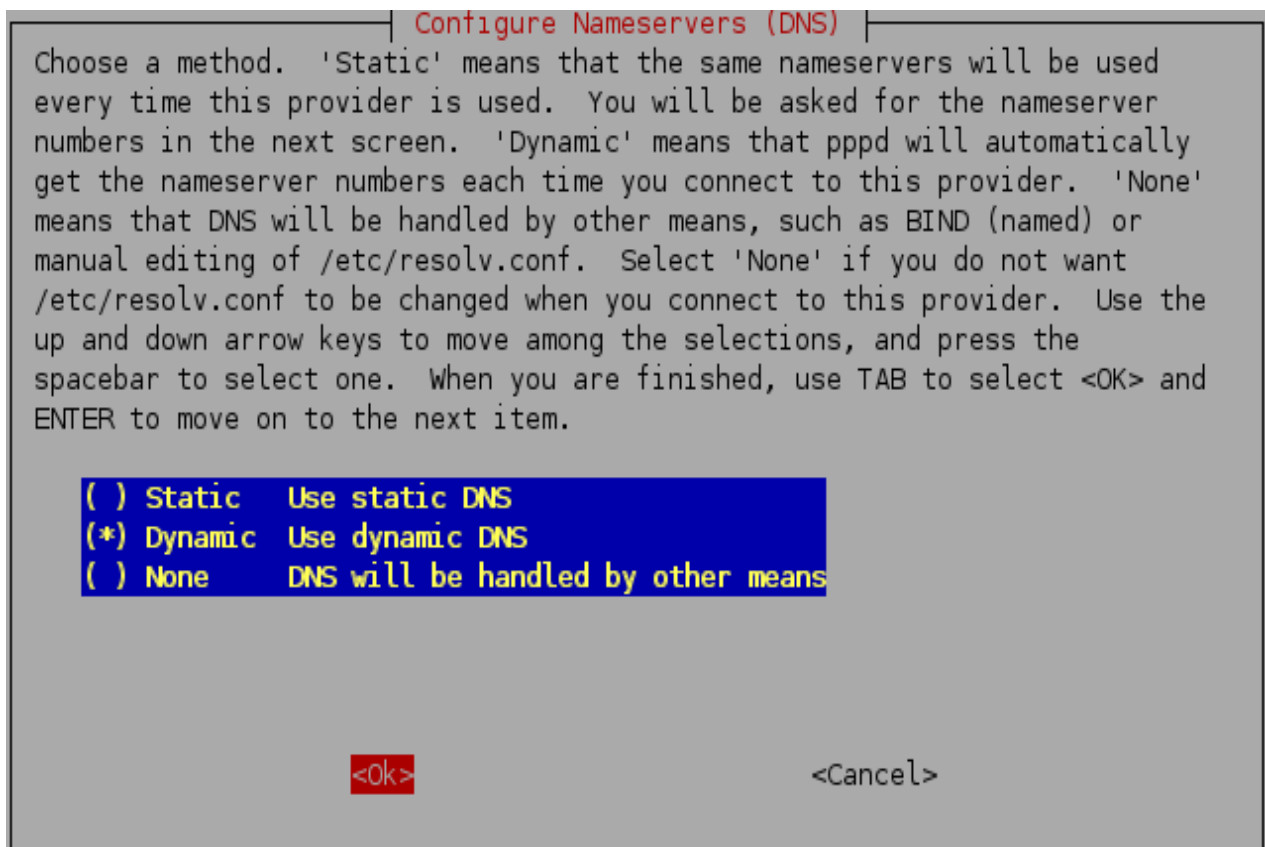
Here you need to enter provider name and you can leave default one and in this example i am giving “comcast” select ok and press enter

```
| Provider Name |
Enter the name you wish to use to refer to this isp. You will probably
want to give the default name of 'provider' to your primary isp. That
way, you can dial it by just giving the command 'pon'. Give each
additional isp a unique name. For example, you might call your employer
'theoffice' and your university 'theschool'. Then you can connect to your
isp with 'pon', your office with 'pon theoffice', and your university with
'pon theschool'. Note: the name must contain no spaces.

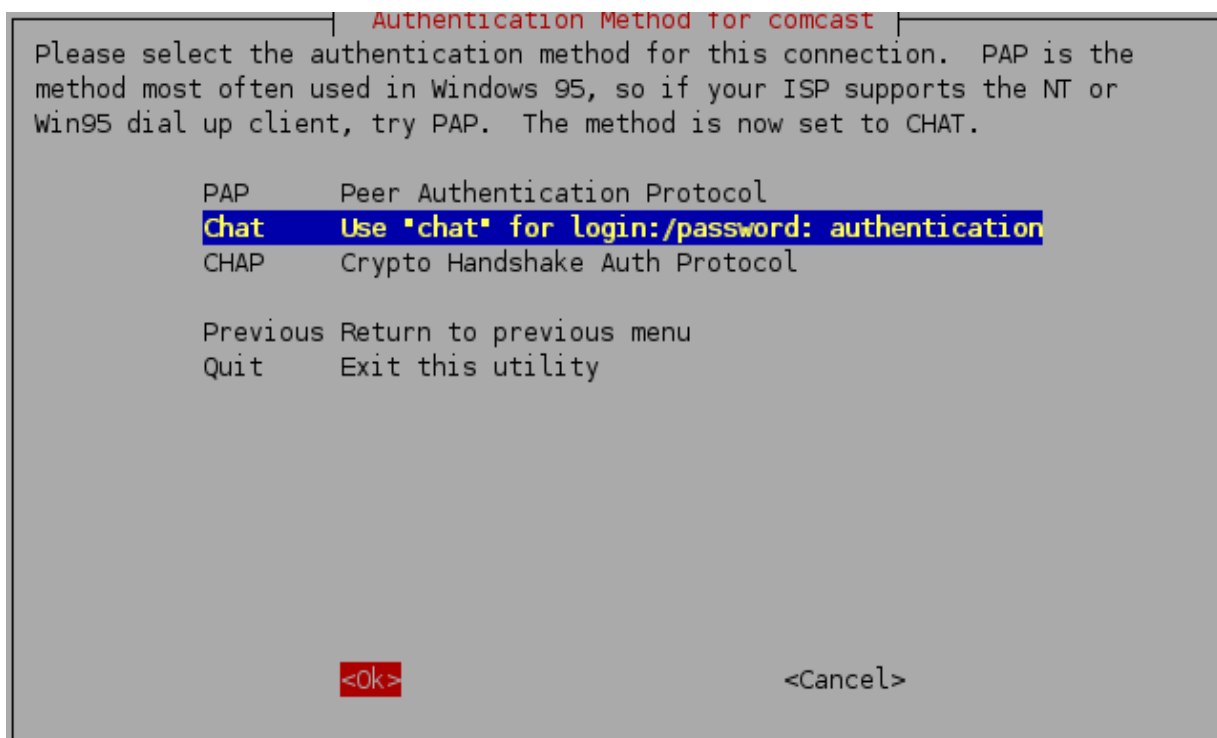
comcast

<Ok> <Cancel>
```

Next screen you need to select “Dynamic Use dynamic DNS” select ok and press enter



You need to select Authentication method here i am selecting “chat :Use chat for login/password :Authentication” select ok and press enter



Select login prompt option leave default select ok and press enter

Login Prompt

Enter the text of the login prompt. Chat will send your username in response. The most common prompts are login: and username:. Sometimes the first letter is capitalized and so we leave it off and match the rest of the word. Sometimes the colon is omitted. If you aren't sure, try ogin:.

ogin:

<Ok> <Cancel>

Select password prompt option leave default select ok and press enter

Password Prompt

Enter the text of the password prompt. Chat will send your password in response. The most common prompt is password:. Sometimes the first letter is capitalized and so we leave it off and match the last part of the word.

ssword:

<Ok> <Cancel>

Enter the username given to you by your ISP in this example i am using "ruchiw" select ok and press enter

User Name
Enter the username given to you by your ISP.
<b>ruchiw</b>
<input type="button" value="Ok"/> <input type="button" value="Cancel"/>

Enter the password given to you by your ISP in this example i am using “myfirstpassword” select ok and press enter

Password
Enter the password your ISP gave you.
<b>myfirstpassword</b>
<input type="button" value="Ok"/> <input type="button" value="Cancel"/>

Enter the modem speed as “115200” select ok and press enter

| Speed |

Enter your modem port speed (e.g. 9600, 19200, 38400, 57600, 115200). I suggest that you leave it at 115200.

115200

<Ok> <Cancel>

Select method of dialing as "Tone" select ok and press enter

| Pulse or Tone |

Select method of dialing. Since almost everyone has touch-tone, you should leave the dialing method set to tone unless you are sure you need pulse. Use the up and down arrow keys to move among the selections, and press the spacebar to select one. When you are finished, use TAB to select <OK> and ENTER to move on to the next item.

(\*) Tone  
( ) Pulse

<Ok> <Cancel>

Enter the number to dial select ok and press enter

Phone Number

Enter the number to dial. Don't include any dashes. See your modem manual if you need to do anything unusual like dialing through a PBX.

01253467234

<Ok> <Cancel>

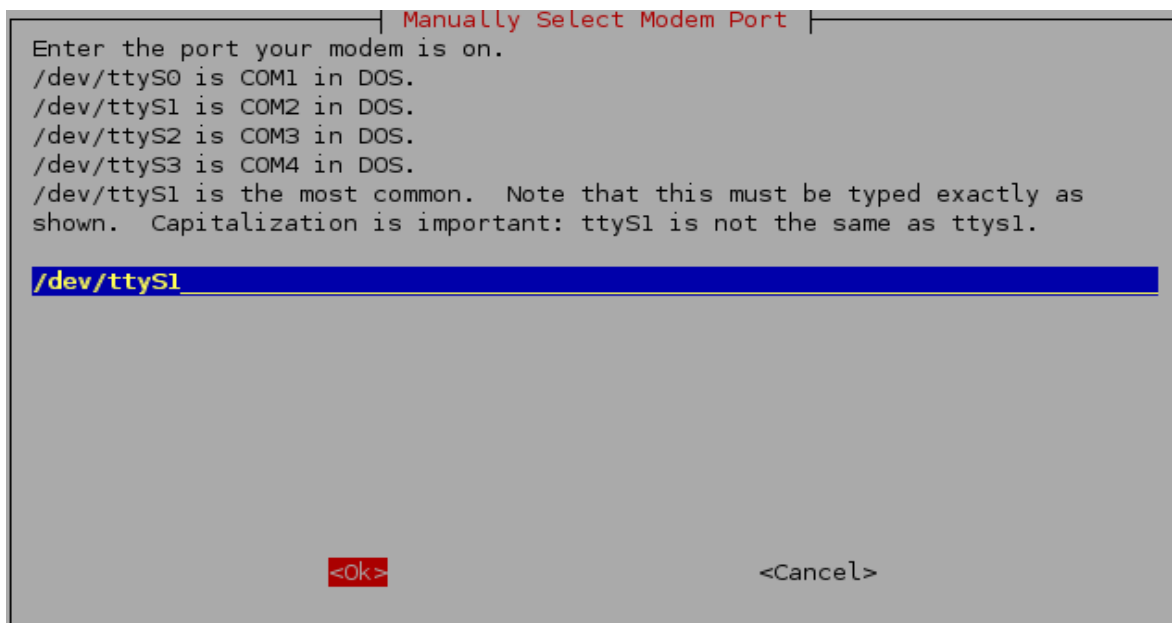
Choose your modem configuration method if you want to detect your modem automatically select yes otherwise select no in this example i am selecting no select ok and press enter

Choose Modem Config Method

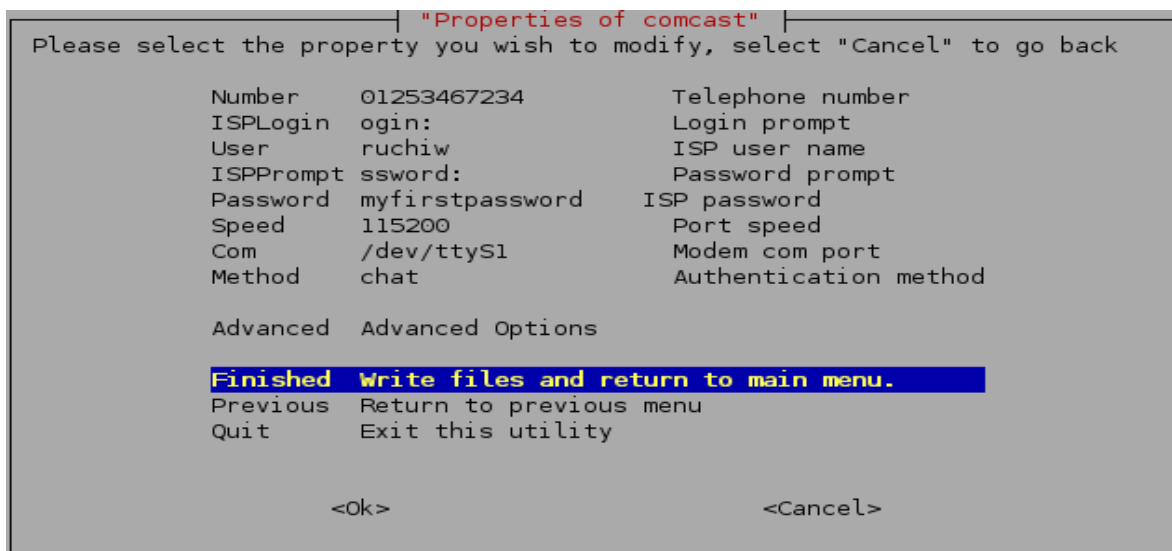
Answer 'yes' to have the port your modem is on identified automatically. It will take several seconds to test each serial port. Answer 'no' if you would rather enter the serial port yourself

<Yes> <No>

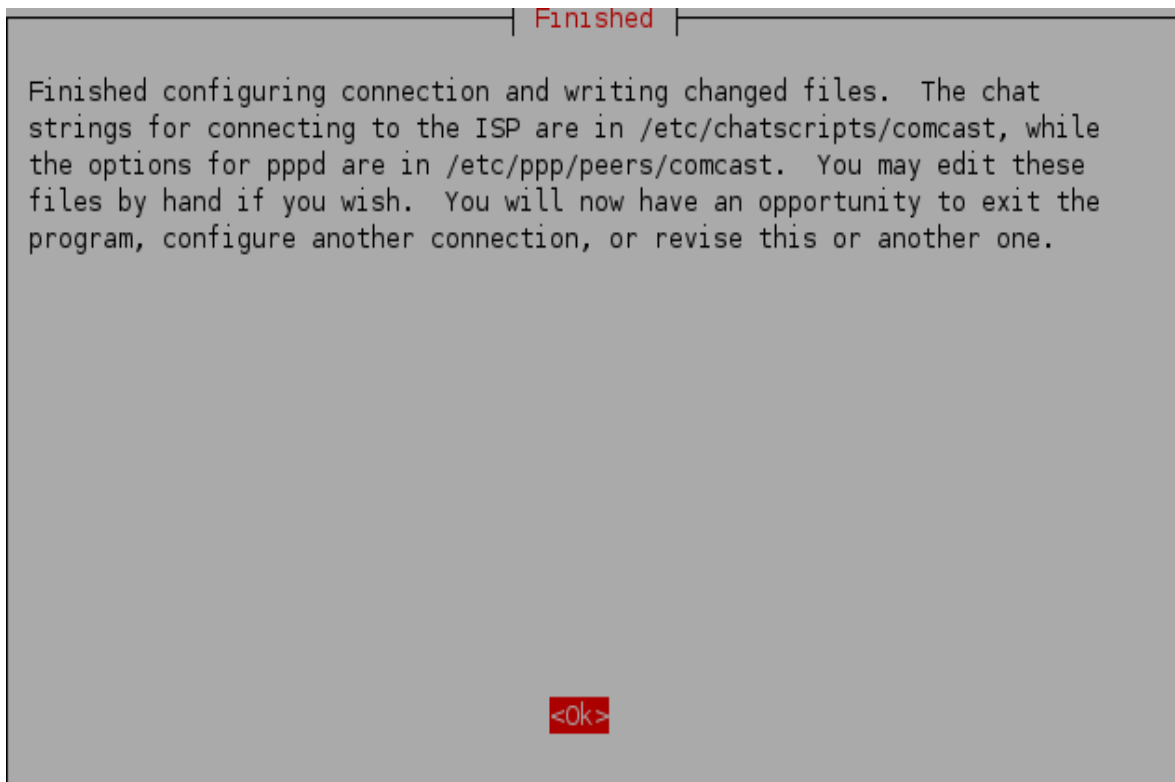
Select the modem port and i leave the default option select ok and press enter



Here is the complete details you have chosen for your provider connection in this example comcast



Finished the connection settings select ok and press enter



Select “Quit Exit this utility”

Exit the terminal window using the following command

`exit`

### Connecting to your ISP

Before you connect for the first time you need to add yourself to both the dip and dialout groups by using the commands

```
sudo adduser YOURNAMEHERE dip  
sudo adduser YOURNAMEHERE dialout  
# connect to the ISP configured as "comcast"  
pon comcast  
# disconnect the ISP configured as "comcast"  
poff comcast
```

If you are trying to connect as default “provider” you need to use the following commands to connect and disconnect

```
pon  
poff
```



You can check the last messages generated by these commands with

# shows the (status) messages generated by pon and poff

```
plog
```

## **1.4. Configuring a Dial-Up Connection using gnome-ppp**

GNOME PPP is an easy to use graphical dialup connection configuring and dialing tool with system tray icon support. It uses GNOME/GTK+ for its graphical interface and integrates well in GNOME desktop environment, but it can be used in other environments.

It also uses WvDial dialer as its backend, providing simple configuration via config files. You can also use plain wvdial if you don't have X running.

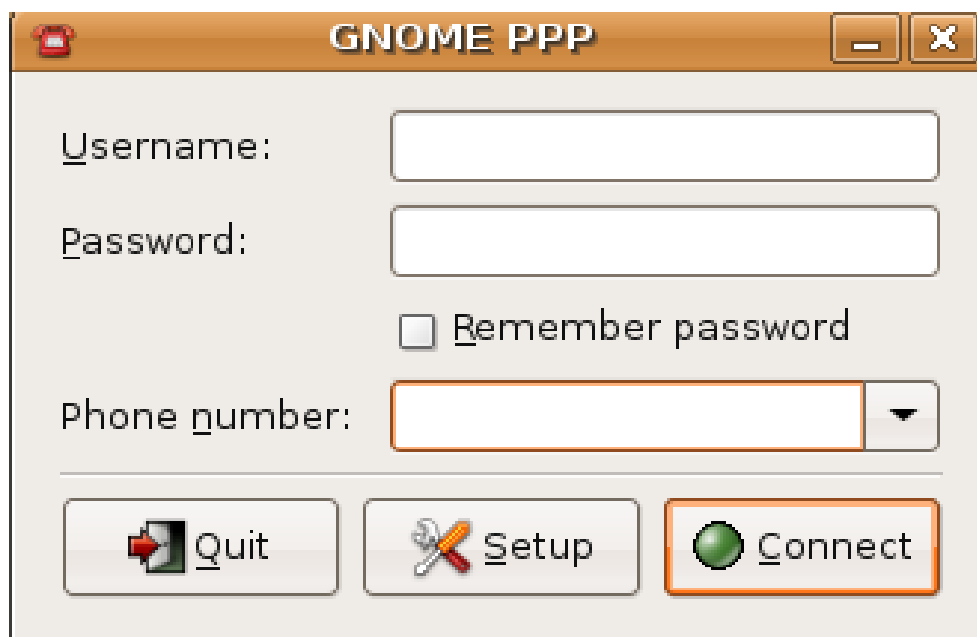
### **Install gnome-ppp Ubuntu**

```
sudo apt-get install gnome-ppp
```

This will complete the installation.

If you want to open the application go to Application—>Internet—>GNOME PPP

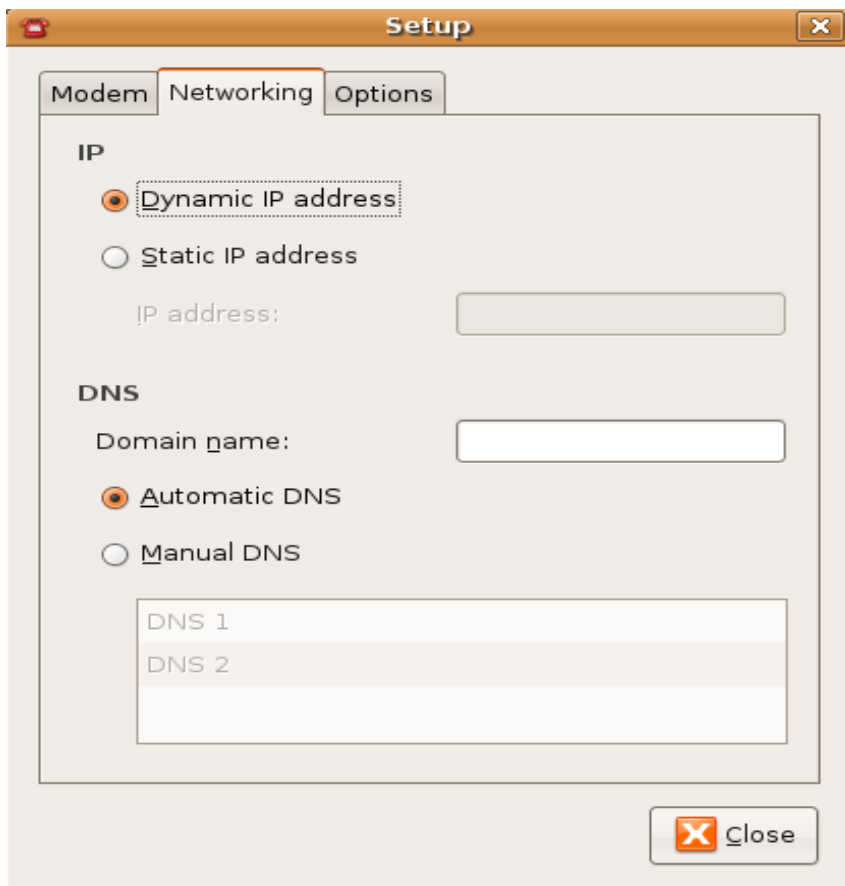
Once application opens you should see the following screen



In the above screen you need to click on setup to configure your settings you should see the following screen configure the modem settings



Next click on networking tab to configure network settings



Next click on options tab to configure general options



Once you have all the details enter the details you can see the following screen



## 2. Open terminal window in Nautilus

In Konqueror you can open a terminal window in any directory by highlighting the directory and pressing F4. Using Nautilus under Gnome you can do the same, but with a bit of work:

1. Run Synaptic and install "nautilus-open-terminal"
2. Log off and on again.
3. Right click on the directory and select "Open in terminal"

### 3. Making Ubuntu work through a corporate Windows IIS proxy server

>From the "readme.txt" page, by Dmitry A. Rozmanov:

"MicroSoft has developed two its own authentication methods - 'NTLM' (NT LanManager) and 'Negotiate'. Because NTLM (NT LanManager) is a proprietary algorithm it is looks like that only MS's products can use it (IE as far as I know). And it gives you a bunch of fun things: If proxy server that you have to use is set so it requires your to authenticate yourself with 'NTLM' algorithm then you will be able to use ONLY MS's products with this proxy server.

'NTLM Authorization Proxy Server' is a proxy-like software, that will authorize you at MS proxy server and at web servers (ISS especially) using MS proprietary NTLM authorization method and it can change some values in your client's request header so that those requests will look like ones made by MS IE. It is written in Python language."

In other words, if the IIS proxy authentication is changed from "Basic" (i.e. clear text, not secure) to "NTLM", you have a problem getting Linux software to talk to the Internet. In particular, wget and apt-get are needed to update the Ubuntu packages.

This is how to get NTLM running and get Ubuntu talking to the 'Net:

1. Download and install the package ntlmaps\_0.9.9-4\_all.deb. Click on the "Terminal" button when installing, and answer the questions. Don't change the port number 5856; it will work fine (it's the local port NTLM will be using). One of the questions is to enter the IP address of your Windows IIS; eg 172.20.1.102. Also put in your Windows AD username and password.

2. In a console window:

```
sudo gedit /etc/ntlmaps/server.conf
```

Scroll down to line 86, and enter the domain name of your LAN. While you here, just check your username and password as being correct. Save and exit.

3. Use System > Preferences > Network Proxy and set all proxies to: 127.0.0.1 on port 5865 (i.e. NTLM's port)

```
sudo gedit /etc/wgetrc
```

Scroll down and change to this (line 77):

```
# You can set the default proxies for wget to use for http and
ftp.
# They will override the value in the environment.
http_proxy = http://127.0.0.1:5865/
#ftp_proxy =
# If you do not want to use proxy at all, set this to off.
use_proxy = on
```

4. Save and exit. Next:

```
sudo gedit /etc/apt/apt.conf
```

If there is nothing, enter the following; alternatively, change to:

```
ACQUIRE {  
http::proxy "http://127.0.0.1:5865/"  
}
```

Save and exit.

5. Lastly, change Firefox:

Edit > Preferences > Advanced > Network > Manual proxy and set it to 127.0.0.1 on port 5865.

7. Close all apps, and reboot. NTLM will connect to your LAN's proxy and you can now download updates and install new apps from the various Ubuntu repositories.

Thanks to Jeff Crawford for his help!!!

## 4. How-to get your removable device mounted under an explicit and persistent name

You might have wondered how comes that your mp3 player is automatically mounted under a nice name like *JUKEBOX* for instance, while you usb stick simply get a name like *USB\_BAR* and *USB\_BAR-1...* for its partitions.

This is actually due to **hal** automatically mounting the device.

This tutorial will show you how to give a label to your partitions in order to have your removable devices mounted under an explicit location such as: */media/red-usb-disk* or */media/my-big-fat-partition*.

When automatically mounting a device, it happens that **hal** already know about this device, in which case, the device is going to be mounted under, let say for an Ipod, */media/Ipod*. But if you have an external hard-drive that you connect through usb, chances are that your external hard-drive partitions are mounted under */media/usbdisk*, */media/usbdisk-1* and so on.

And actually, partition one might be mounted under *usbdisk-1* on day and *usbdisk* the day after :s. Imagine you stock all you music on your external harddrive. Today, you harddrive get mounted under */media/usbdisk* and you create a playlist. Tomorrow, when you plug you harddrive, your music partition might get mounted under */media/usbdisk-1*, you start your music player, this one kept your last playlist in memory, but you simply can't replay it because the files have moved from */media/usbdisk* to */media/usbdisk-1* :(.

This is where labeling a partition will become handy.

Because linux comes with a whole range of file systems, we are going to need different tools depending on which filesystem you are using.

From now on, I will suppose you know which file system your device is formatted to. If you don't know yet, simply plug you device in order to get it mounted, then run:

```
$ df -T
```

This will output something like:

```
.....  
.....  
/dev/scd0 iso9660 3011040 3011040 0 100% /media/cdrom0  
/dev/sdb1 vfat 244480 20756 223724 9% /media/USBDRIVE
```

You can find the file system type on the second column: here iso9660 for the cdrom and vfat for the usb disk. The device name is found in the first column: here /dev/scd0 and /dev/sdb1

From now on, we are going to work on device /dev/sdaX, you will have to adjust this in accordance with the device you want to rename.

## EXT2/3 file system.

Easy: the command "e2label" will do it:

```
sudo e2label /dev/sdaX
```

will show you what the current label is, while

```
sudo e2label /dev/sdb1 newlabel
```

will allocate "newlabel" as the... um... new label...

## VFAT file system

This one is a bit more tricky as you can't simply use the command line, but you will need to edit a file in order to let the tool know the name of the device.

The package we are going to use here is *mtools*. If the package is not installed on your machine, please run:

```
$ sudo apt-get install mtools
```

## Informing mtools about your device

**mtools** needs to be told an "windows like" device name (something like G:) to match a linux device name. To do so, create and edit file ~/.mtoolsrc and add:

```
drive i: file="/dev/sdaX"
```

Where *i*: is the "windows name" and /dev/sdaX is the linux file system associated to it.

## Retrieving the existing label

Now, you can use **mlabel**, provided by **mttools** package to retrieve the existing label. To do so, trigger the following command:

```
$ mlabel -s i:
```

Depending if the device already had a label or not, **mlabel** will output either:

```
Volume has no label
```

or

```
Volume label is MY LABEL
```

## Setting a new label

Setting a new label is done via the following command line:

```
$ mlabel i:"my_new_label"
```

## Deleting an existing label

Deleting an existing label can be done with:

```
$ mlabel -c i:
```

Doing so, you won't be prompt and the label will be removed.

(From <http://www.debuntu.org/device-partition-labeling>)

## 5. How to set file / application associations in Gnome

All you want to do is double click on a file in Nautilus and have the correct application open that file. For example, Gnome's default setting for video files is Totem, but you would rather use VLC (because it's much clearer than Totem). How do you do this?

Very easy. Right click (in Nautilus) on the file. Select Properties. Select Open With. Choose an application and click the radio button. If you want to use a program not on the list, then select Add, and choose one.

## 6. Installing Internet Explorer on Linux

Some websites demand Microsoft Internet Explorer. This is an easy way to do it:

<http://www.tatanka.com.br/ies4linux/page/Installation>

Works fine.

## 7. Hidden files/ folders

To show hidden files / folders in Nautilus, the File Manager: press Ctrl H

To switch off, do same.

If, when trying to "Save As" a file from any application and you see all the hidden files / folders, RIGHT click on the file list and un-select "Show Hidden"

## 8. Digital camera problems in Ubuntu?

From <http://ubuntuforums.org/showthread.php?t=340271> :

**step 1: plug in your camera**

**step 2: try to import the photos, and when it gives you the error, just exit out**

**step 3: open up the terminal, and type**

Code:

```
lsusb
```

**step 4:** find the entry that looks like it belongs to your camera. It usually has the vendor name somewhere in there. For example, my camera is a Kodak easy share c315, and when I typed "lsusb" I got this:

Quote:

```
mark@ubuntu:~$ lsusb
Bus 003 Device 004: ID 05ac:1205 Apple Computer, Inc.
Bus 003 Device 003: ID 0d49:3210 Maxtor
Bus 003 Device 001: ID 0000:0000
Bus 001 Device 004: ID 040a:059a Kodak Co.
Bus 001 Device 001: ID 0000:0000
Bus 002 Device 002: ID 046d:c03d Logitech, Inc.
Bus 002 Device 001: ID 0000:0000
mark@ubuntu:~$
```

My camera is listed on the 4th line down, with "kodak co." after.

**Step 5:** type

Code:

```
sudo cp /etc/udev/rules.d/45-libgphoto2.rules /etc/udev/rules.d/45-libgphoto2.rules_backup
```

If you use **ubuntu** or **xubuntu**:

Code:

```
sudo gedit /etc/udev/rules.d/45-libgphoto2.rules
```

Then go to step 6

**Step 6:** Go to the bottom of the file, where it says

Quote:



```
LABEL="libgphoto2_rules_end"
```

Above that, hit enter a few times and then, using the numbers preceding the vendor name that you got from the `lsusb` command, paste and fill out the following line into the file

where `VENDORID` is the first half of numbers in the "key" and `PRODUCTID` is the second half of numbers. Example, my camera's line was "Bus 001 Device 004: ID 040a:059a Kodak Co.". `VENDORID` is "040a" and my `PRODUCTID` is 059a.

Code:

```
SYSFS{idVendor}=="VENDORID", SYSFS{idProduct}=="PRODUCTID", MODE="0660",  
GROUP="plugdev"
```

**Step 7:** save the file, and make sure it works. Try taking a few pictures with your camera and try importing them, and if it works, then it will let you import them rather than give you that error message. If it doesn't work, make sure you got everything right, and if it still doesn't work, just delete the line and look for a different solution

## 9. Set Windows as Default OS when Dual Booting Ubuntu

When you install a dual-boot of Ubuntu, one of the frustrating things that you'll immediately notice is that Ubuntu is now set as the default operating system in the Grub loader. There's an easy way to switch back to using Windows as the default.

To make this change, you'll first have to boot into Ubuntu, and then run the following command:

```
sudo gedit /boot/grub/menu.lst
```

Find this section of the file:

```
## default num  
# Set the default entry to the entry number NUM. Numbering starts from 0, and  
# the entry number 0 is the default if the command is not used.  
#  
# You can specify 'saved' instead of a number. In this case, the default entry  
# is the entry saved with the command 'savedefault'.  
# WARNING: If you are using dmraid do not change this entry to 'saved' or your  
# array will desync and will not let you boot your system.  
default 0
```

The important line is the last one. You will need to change that number 0 to match the Windows boot section. Typically it's always going to be 4 on a default dual-boot configuration. Change this value to 4, and then save and reboot your machine. You should go into Windows instead of Ubuntu automatically.

Note: The blocks at the bottom of the file match the items in the menu. You can change this value to match whichever item you want as default, just remember that numbering starts at 0.

## 10. MD5 calculator.

Most download sites provide an MD5 checksum with the downloadable files. This is used after you have downloaded the file to check that the transmission went clean. Many newcomers find it difficult / don't know how to calculate the MD5 checksum of a file. It is as simple as opening a terminal window in the directory where the file is that you want to check, and typing in:

```
md5sum file.ext
```

However, if you want to have a "right-click-on-file-and-just-do-it" solution, then copy the script below to `~/ .gnome2/nautilus-scripts` and make it executable:

```
#!/bin/bash
if [ $# = 0 ] ; then exit ; fi
zenity --question --text "MD5 calc may take some time..."
if [ $? -eq 0 ] ; then
    md5=`md5sum $1`
    zenity --info --text $md5
fi
```

## 11. Simple single user firewall

While most internet connections nowadays are done via an ADSL router with its own firewall (yep, it's Linux!), dial up users have no such protection. Ubuntu ships with "iptables", the best firewall in the world. Its default setting is with all incoming ports closed. This is fine, but a better bet would be to have incoming ports in "drop" mode. The difference is that "close" means your PC will send a message back "Connection refused", while "drop" will not respond at all. This simply means that your PC is invisible to the outside world (also called "stealth mode").

Create a shell script with the code below. Make it executable by right click on the name in Nautilus, select "Properties" then "Permissions" and tick the box next to "Make executable". Run the script in a terminal with:

```
sudo ./mywall.sh      (using the name you created, of course!)
```

```
iptables --flush
iptables --flush -t nat
iptables --policy INPUT DROP
iptables --policy OUTPUT DROP
iptables --policy FORWARD DROP
iptables -A OUTPUT -j ACCEPT -o lo
iptables -A INPUT -j ACCEPT -i lo
iptables -A OUTPUT -m state --state NEW,RELATED,ESTABLISHED -j ACCEPT
iptables -A INPUT -m state --state RELATED,ESTABLISHED -j ACCEP
```

## 12. "But it doesn't look like Windows!"

A lament often heard from newcomers. And, to be honest, the brown and orange theme of Ubuntu is, to my mind, a bit odd. So how do we change it?

There are a number of themes bundled with Ubuntu. Go to **System -> Preferences -> Theme**. Select any one you see and click Close.

But what if there isn't one particular theme you like? How do you get that "Windows look"?

1. Point your web browser to <http://art.gnome.org/themes>
2. Select one you like. (Note: some links on the site are for splash screens or backgrounds. Make sure you select a THEME or BORDERS).
3. Click on "Download" and save the file somewhere on your disk.
4. Go to **System -> Preferences -> Theme** and select "Install Theme". Navigate to where you downloaded the theme.
5. Theme Manager will now show you this theme and ask you whether to use it now. If you say yes, it will show it as "Custom theme" and inform you that you can save it.
6. Click "Save Theme" and give it a meaningful name. This will permanently store the theme as part of your Gnome system.

For example, if you search on that web site for "XP" you will find a "WinXP Blue" theme that looks like... um... XP. A search for "Redmond" will give you the Win98 theme; "W2k" will give you Windows 2000.

## 13. Running MS Office 2000 under Linux with Wine.

A detailed explanation can be found here:

<http://wine-review.blogspot.com/2007/09/running-ms-office-2000-under-linux-with.html>

However, a simpler way is to use Synaptic to install Crossover. Crossover is a commercial package that enables some Microsoft programs to run on Linux, such as MS Office. Installing Crossover will also install Wine.

Once Crossover is installed, you can now use your legitimate MS Office CD and install the software. Crossover will create a folder named ".crossover" (note the dot in front; this makes it hidden). Unfortunately, Crossover is limited to 30 days. What now?

Simple. Create a shortcut to:

```
"wine "/home/albert/.crossover/drive_c/Program Files/Microsoft Office/Office10/WINWORD.EXE"
```

(Obviously your username won't be "albert"! - Change accordingly)

For Excel, Access etc. use:

```
EXCEL.EXE
```

POWERPNT.EXE  
MSACCESS.EXE  
FRONTPG.EXE

## 14. "I cannot see my USB memory stick!"

Manufacturers of memory sticks don't always play by the rules. On occasion you may find that nothing happens when you plug in a memory stick. Here's the work around.

1. Create a directory to be used in future:

```
sudo mkdir /mnt/USB_MEM
```

2. Change the permissions to this directory:

```
sudo chmod 777 /mnt/USB_MEM
```

3. Steps 1 and 2 only needs to be done once. Now plug in your memory stick and mount it:

```
sudo mount /dev/sda1 /mnt/USB_MEM
```

4. Drilling down to /mnt/USB\_MEM should now give you the data on your memory stick.

5. When finished working with it, you should unmount it:

```
sudo sync  
sudo umount /dev/sda1
```

(Note: it's "**umount**", not "unmount" - no "n")

## 15. How to save BBC news clips as MPEG movies.

The BBC is not known for its friendly stance towards Linux. Using something like the "DownloadHelper" plug-in in Firefox, one can save all "normal" Flash video's, i.e. from YouTube. But the BBC uses their own way of streaming media, and has recently upgraded their software, making it impossible to capture. However..... here's how to make a stand-alone copy.

1. Use Synaptic to install the program "recordmydesktop" (!! ) and "gtk-recordmydesktop"
2. Get to the web page with the video clip on it. Position the video window quite high up on the page, so as to leave space for the gtk- recordmydesktop controls.
3. Start gtk- recordmydesktop. (It should be under Applications -> Sound and Video). It will show a small picture of your desktop (i.e. the BBC webpage) and allow you to use cross-hairs to define an area to capture. Use this to draw a square around the video window on the webpage.
4. Now click "Record" and VERY quickly click on the "Play" button of the video window (you don't want to record your mouse pointer, do you?)
5. Gtk- recordmydesktop will minimise to a square white button on your task bar. When the video is finished playing, click on this button (it will turn red) and it will stop recording.
6. Now WAIT. It takes a while to transcode the video to the output format. It will save the file as "out.ogg" in your home directory.
7. If you want to change the video format, use VLC to transcode it.

## 16. How to back up MSOffice / Internet Explorer running under Wine on Linux.

1. Move the folder /home/user/.wine/dosdevices out of the .wine directory
2. Move the folder /home/user/.wine/ie/ie6/dosdevices out of the .wine directory
3. Move /home/user/.wine/drive\_c/windows/profiles/user out of the .wine directory
4. `zip -r wine.zip /home/user/.wine`
5. You now have a working wine recovery disk.
6. Now move the dosdevices and profiles directories back to the main .wine directories, otherwise your current wine won't work
7. To restore on a new machine: install wine, then unzip your backup in .wine, `replace=yes` (The wine install will create the directories you removed above)

## 17. VMWare Player does not use USB 2.0??

VMWare Player 2 defaults to mount USB memory sticks as USB 1.1, running on a Linux host. To make it mount as USB 2.0 (and thus increase the speed!!!) add the following lines to the end of the .vmx file in the directory where the VMWare image is kept:

```
scsi0.pciSlotNumber = "18"  
ehci.present = "TRUE"  
ehci.pciSlotNumber = "19"
```

(This bug now fixed in VMPlayer 3)

## 18. Using the floppy drive.

Right click on the task bar and select "Add to panel". Scroll down and select "Disk mounter" and click "Add". An icon like this will appear on the task bar:



When you left click on this icon, you can select "Mount floppy drive"

Note: any removable drive will now also show up with its own icon when you plug it in. This greatly simplifies un-mounting these drives: simply left-click and select "Unmount"

## 29. Set default directories (e.g. for pictures / downloads / screen saver)

Ubuntu has a very nice screen saver called "Pictures Folder" accessible from System -> Preferences -> Screen Saver. This allows you to have a slide show of your favourite pictures as a screen saver. However, it is very annoying that there is no easy way to configure the directory for these pictures -- the default is ALL the pictures in your home directory.

To fix this:

```
gedit /home/albert/.config/user-dirs.dirs
```

(Obviously substitute your name for "albert"!;-)

Now change line

```
XDG_PICTURES_DIR="$HOME/pics/ALBERT_STUFF/backgrounds"
```

This file typically looks like this:

```
# This file is written by xdg-user-dirs-update
# If you want to change or add directories, just edit the line
# you're
# interested in. All local changes will be retained on the next
# run
# Format is XDG_XXX_DIR="$HOME/yyy", where yyy is a shell-
# escaped
# homedir-relative path, or XDG_XXX_DIR="/yyy", where /yyy is
# an
# absolute path. No other format is supported.
#
XDG_DESKTOP_DIR="$HOME/Desktop"
XDG_DOWNLOAD_DIR="$HOME/Desktop"
XDG_TEMPLATES_DIR="$HOME/"
XDG_PUBLICSHARE_DIR="$HOME/"
XDG_DOCUMENTS_DIR="$HOME/"
XDG_MUSIC_DIR="$HOME/"
XDG_PICTURES_DIR="$HOME/pics/ALBERT_STUFF/backgrounds"
XDG_VIDEOS_DIR="$HOME/"
```

You can also change the other defaults here.

## **19. How to forcefully create a desktop shortcut on a user's desktop.**

Here's the problem: you want to create a desktop shortcut on a user's desktop to appear every time the user logs on, even if he has deleted it previously. Even more problematic: when a new user logs in for the FIRST time, there is no "Desktop" folder yet - that only gets created during the first log in process. Indeed, the only files created when a new user is created are:

**.profile**

.bashrc  
.bash\_logout  
.Examples

OK, this is the process.

1. Edit the file ~/.profile and add a line at the bottom:

```
# ~/.profile: executed by the command interpreter for login
shells.
# This file is not read by bash(1), if ~/.bash_profile or
~/.bash_login
# exists.
# see /usr/share/doc/bash/examples/startup-files for examples.
# the files are located in the bash-doc package.

# the default umask is set in /etc/profile; for setting the umask
# for ssh logins, install and configure the libpam-umask package.
#umask 022

# if running bash
if [ -n "$BASH_VERSION" ]; then
    # include .bashrc if it exists
    if [ -f "$HOME/.bashrc" ]; then
        . "$HOME/.bashrc"
    fi
fi

# set PATH so it includes user's private bin if it exists
if [ -d "$HOME/bin" ] ; then
    PATH="$HOME/bin:$PATH"
fi

/var/force_it.sh &
```

Save this as your "master" profile file, and copy / overwrite it into the user's home directory.

2. Create the shell script /var/force\_it.sh

```
#!/bin/bash
```

```
sleep 10
# ${stringA}
HomePath='/home/'$USER'/Desktop'
CopyIt='cp -f /var/force.desktop '$HomePath
${CopyIt}
```

Make it executable

3. Create the desktop shortcut file `/var/force.desktop`

```
#!/usr/bin/env xdg-open
[Desktop Entry]
Name=Text Editor
Comment=Edit text files
Exec=gedit %U
Terminal=false
Type=Application
StartupNotify=true
Icon=accessories-text-editor
```

Make it executable

The line containing the "Exec" statement is the one that will execute your program. Edit to suit fit.

That's it. When the user logs on (first time or subsequent), the `.profile` script is run. This in turns calls the `force_it.sh` script in directory `/var` as a separate process (hence the "&"). The `force_it.sh` script sleeps for 10 seconds (to give Gnome time to do its thing) and then copies `force.desktop` to the user's desktop.

Of course, one can add more lines in the `force_it.sh` to copy more shortcuts; provided that you have these available somewhere. Just edit the line to suit:

```
CopyIt='cp -f /var/force.desktop '$HomePath
```

and execute it with:

```
${CopyIt}
```

## 20. Set up an auto shutdown feature.

Suppose you want a computer to automatically shut down at a specific time, how do you do it?

Well, as a superuser you could type in the command below, or stick it in a shell script:

```
sudo shutdown -h 21:30
```



and the computer will shut down at 9:30 pm.

But how to automate this? After struggling through numerous blogs where every second person started off with a *"I haven't tested this, but..."* (Gah!!) I figured it out:

1. First, change the suid of shutdown to allow ordinary users to run it as root. WARNING: You don't want to do this on a server, as it would mean any user can shut down your server!!

```
sudo chmod u+s /sbin/shutdown
```

2. Next create a script and save it somewhere safe:

```
#First ensure shutdown isn't running already.....
shutdown -c
#Now set up shutdown for a specific time, in 24 hour format
shutdown -h 21:30
```

(Remember to make this executable!)

3. Now log on as the user whom you want to enable this for. Select System -> Preferences -> Startup Applications. Click on "Add". Enter the path and name of your script into the "Command" field, and enter whatever useful stuff into "Name" and "Comment". Save and quit.

When that user logs in next time, the script will be run and shutdown scheduled for whatever time you selected.

To cancel this on the user's computer, simply enter into a terminal:

```
shutdown -c
```

## 21. How to generate and send emails from Python

Two ways of doing it: firstly with an ISP that doesn't use TLS:

```
import smtplib
fromAddr='none@nowhere.com'
toAddr='valid@email.com'
```

```
header = 'From: '+fromAddr+'\nTo: '+toAddr+'\nSubject: test\nX-Mailer: ZMail\n'
message=header+'Test message here'
server = smtplib.SMTP('SMTP.igrin.co.nz')
server.login('user', 'password')
server.set_debuglevel(1)
server.sendmail(fromAddr, toAddr, message)
server.quit()
```

Then with ISP that does use TLS, such as Google mail:

```
import smtplib
fromAddr='validUser@gmail.com'
toAddr='validUser@receivingAdr.com'
header = 'From: '+fromAddr+'\nTo: '+toAddr+'\nSubject: test\nX-Mailer: ZMail\n'
message=header+'Test message here'
server = smtplib.SMTP('SMTP.gmail.com', 587)
server.set_debuglevel(1)
server.ehlo()
server.starttls()
server.login('validUser@gmail.com', 'password')
server.sendmail(fromAddr, toAddr, message)
server.quit()
```

Useful for auto-generating emails for various reasons, e.g. something going pear shaped on an unattended machine.

## 22. Help! My task bars are gone!

On some PC's the hardware settings, power management and "Suspend" functions of the Gnome desktop can wipe out your task bars. This looks more serious than what it really is, but still is a royal pain. To get back your task bars, do the following.

1. You need a terminal window. If CTRL-F2 doesn't work for you, a quick get-around is to create a launcher on the desk top (right click on the desktop) and set it to run **gnome-terminal**.
2. Make sure that the app is dead: **pkill gnome-panel**
3. Delete the broken directory: **rm -rf ~/.gconf/apps/panel**
4. Now log out of your gnome session: **gnome-session-save --kill --silent**
5. Log back in. Open a terminal and type in: **gnome-panel**
6. Lastly, click System -> Preferences -> Startup Applications (or 'Sessions' on older versions) and add a new entry: **gnome-panel**

Now log out and back in again. Task bars restored to default settings.

## 23. Python documentation

Python has a vast number of pre-written modules that does just about everything you can dream off. However, finding the documentation / what's installed on your machine can be taxing....

Here's an easy way: copy the code below into a text editor, and save as pydocgui.py (**NOT** pydoc.py !!!!)

Run: python pydocgui.py (or create a shortcut)

A small GUI will open. Click on "open browser" and you'll be able to see all the documentation of all the Python modules on your machine.

Code:

```
import pydoc
pydoc.gui()
```

When finished, click on "quit serving" to shut down the Python webserver.

## 24. Installing new fonts on Ubuntu

Make a root directory :

```
sudo mkdir /usr/share/fonts/truetype/myfonts
```

Copy the font(s) into the newly created directory:

```
sudo cp newfont.ttf /usr/share/fonts/truetype/myfonts
```

To make active:

```
sudo fc-cache -f -v
```

Now log off and log on again, and your apps (eg. OpenOffice) can use the new font.

Lots of fonts at: <http://www.1001freefonts.com/>

## 25. Running a program in a terminal using a desktop shortcut

Sometimes you may want to run a program or a script in a terminal window, but it's a pain to open a terminal and type in the command. This can be automated by creating a "Launcher" on the desktop and putting this in the "Command" box:

```
gnome-terminal -x /home/albert/program
```

This will open a terminal window, then execute the program inside that terminal window.

## 26. How to install the latest version of OpenOffice.org

1. Use Synaptic to remove ALL the installed OpenOffice files. (There are quite a few).
2. Download the latest version from here: <http://download.openoffice.org/other.html#tested-full>
3. Save the tarball file somewhere convenient.
4. Open the tarball by double clicking on it in Nautilus, and extract the directory inside the tarball to somewhere convenient on your hard drive.
5. Open a terminal window in the directory "DEBS" directory below the one you extracted above; e.g. /OOO310\_m19\_native\_packed-1\_en-US.9420/DEBS/
6. Type in:

```
sudo dpkg -i *.deb
```

7. Now change to the desktop integration folder, e.g.: /OOO310\_m19\_native\_packed-1\_en-US.9420/DEBS/desktop-integration/ and repeat the command above.

## 27. How to extend Nautilus with shell scripts.

Easy! Copy your script into the folder ~/.gnome2/nautilus-scripts. When you now right-click on a file in Nautilus, you can run that script against the selected file.

## Appendix A. Useful links

Ubuntu how-to: <http://www.psychocats.net/ubuntu/index.php>  
<http://www.debuntu.org/>

Ubuntu restricted format (mp3, DVD's etc) How-To:

<https://help.ubuntu.com/community/RestrictedFormats>

All your Ubuntu questions answered. A concise "how-to" guide that just about explains every single question

<http://ubuntuguide.org/wiki/Ubuntu:Feisty>

<http://www.foogazi.com/2006/11/24/20-must-read-howtos-and-guides-for-linux/>

Speed up Firefox

<http://www.ubuntugeek.com/speed-up-firefox-web-browser.html>

## Appendix B. OpenOffice FAQ's.

Although OpenOffice is cross platform, newcomers are often confused with the way OpenOffice handles certain things. Herewith some tips.

### Changing Page Orientation in OpenOffice

OpenOffice.org uses page styles to specify the orientation of the pages in a document. For example, to change the page orientation of one or more pages in a document from portrait to landscape in a document, you need to create a page style that uses the landscape orientation, and then apply the page style to the pages.

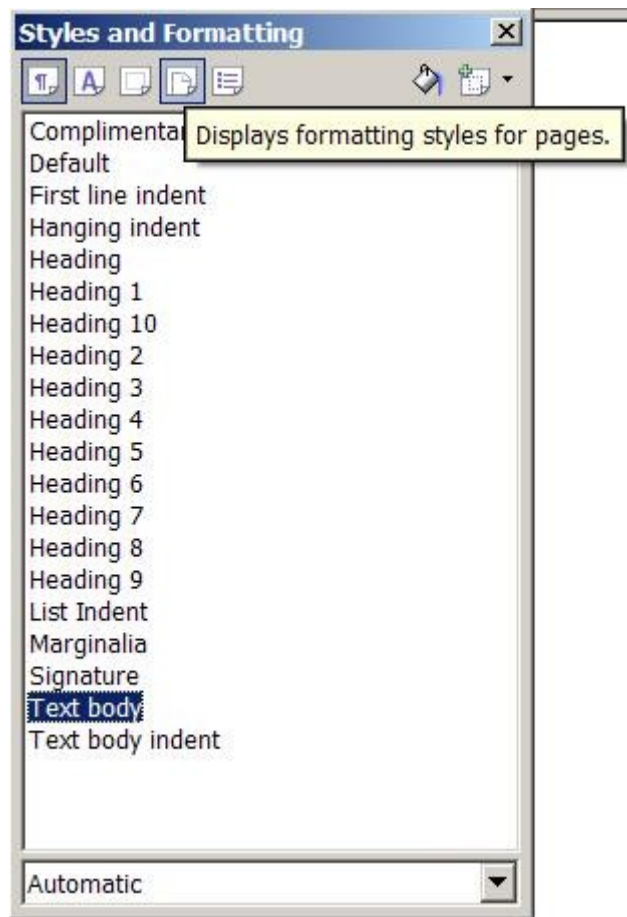
#### To Change the Page Orientation to Landscape or Portrait

To change the page orientation for all pages that use the current page style:

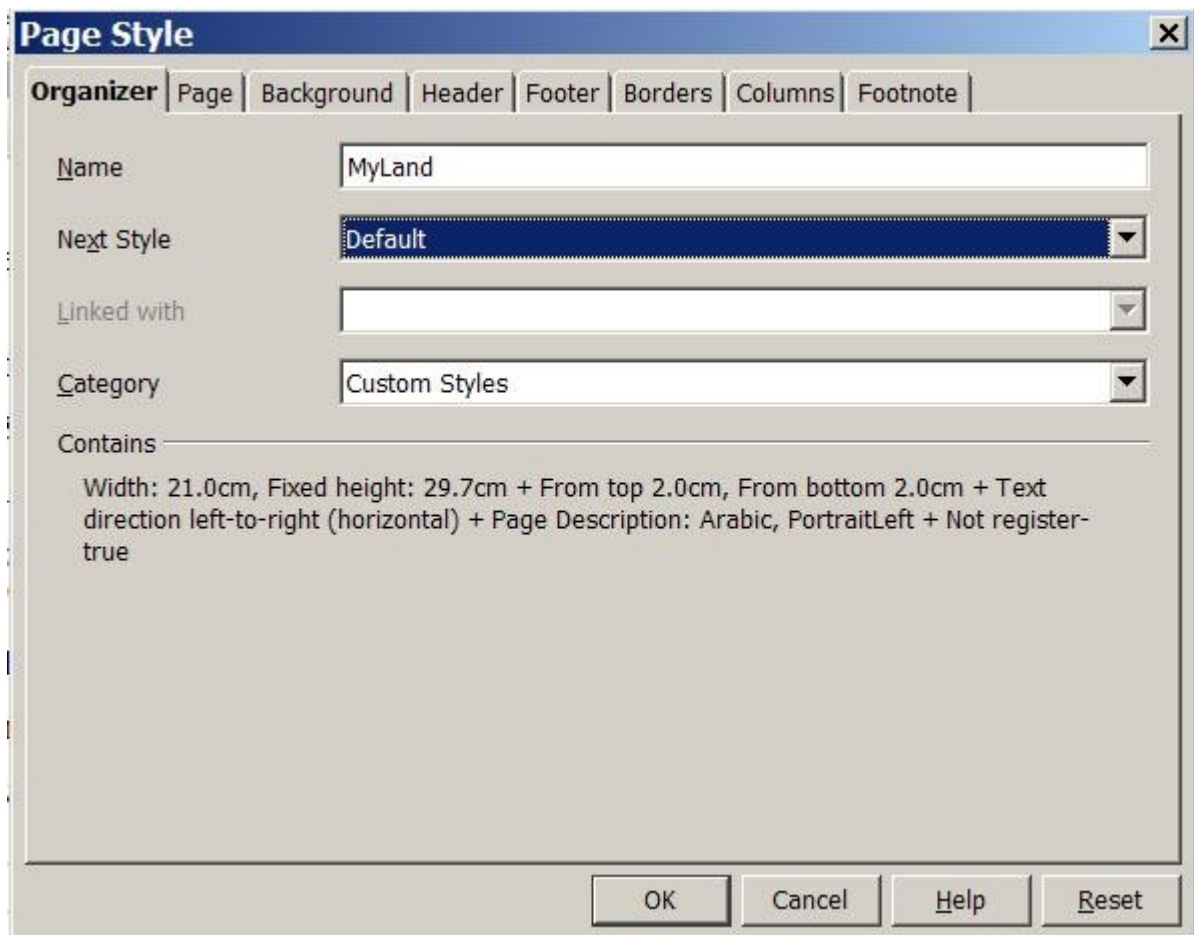
1. Choose **Format - Page**.
2. Click the **Page** tab.
3. Under **Paper format**, select **Portrait** or **Landscape**.
4. Click **OK**.

To change the page orientation only for the current page, you first need a page style, then apply that style:

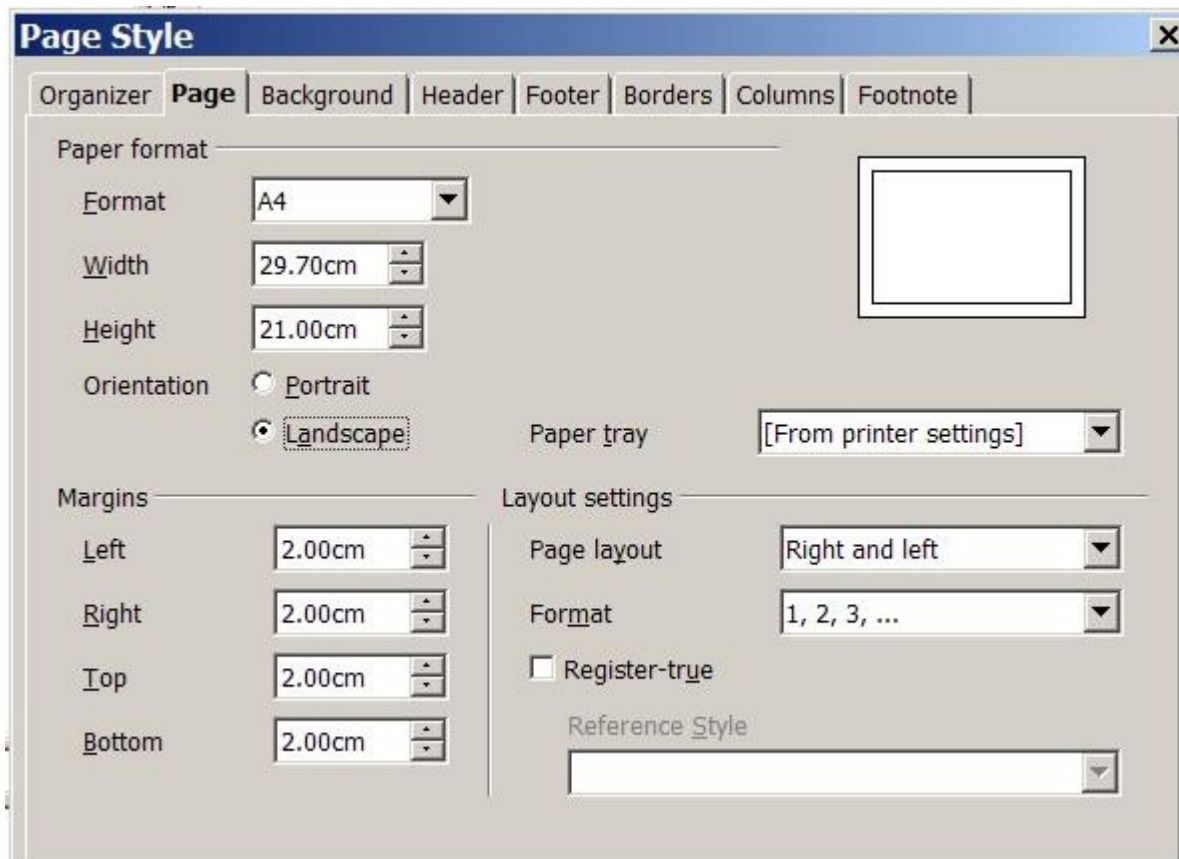
1. Choose **Format - Styles and Formatting**.
2. Click the **Page Styles** icon.



3. Right-click, and choose **New**.
4. On the **Organizer** tab page, type a name for the page style in the **Name** box, for example "My Landscape".



5. In the **Next Style** box, select the page style that you want to apply to the next page.
  - To only apply the new page style to a single page, select "Default" as the next page style.
  - To apply the new page style to all subsequent pages, select the name of the new page style.
6. Click the **Page** tab.
7. Under **Paper format**, select **Portrait** or **Landscape**.



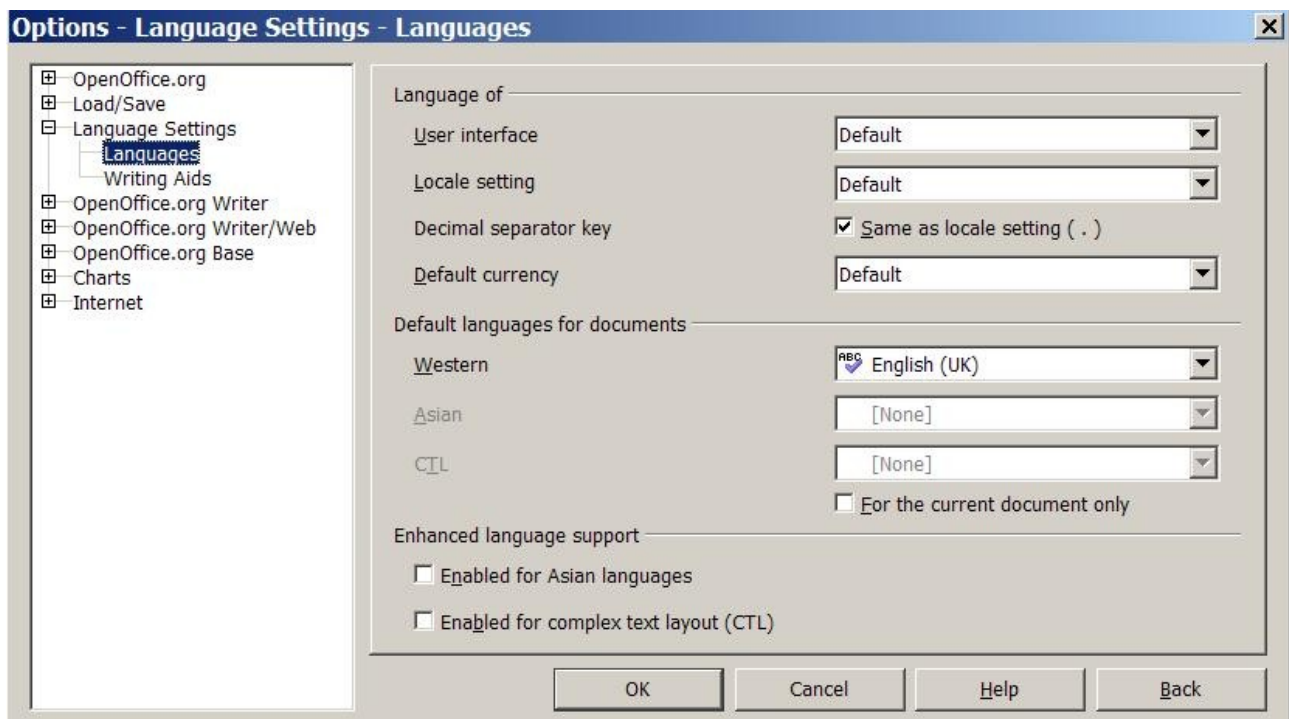
8. Click **OK**.

## Setting up the spell checker.

"Help! OpenOffice doesn't have a spell checker!" Well, it does. Where the problem comes in is that it doesn't have a *New Zealand* English spell checker. No problem:


1. Click Tools -> Options -> Language Settings -> Languages.





2. Use the drop-down list at "Default languages for documents" and select "English (UK)"
3. Click "OK". Done!

However, if you have already started a document, this won't work... or often if you open a Word document created on a Windows machine :-( To get your current document to "pick up" the spell checker:

Open your document - select all of the text and then Format > Character > Language then select the language of the new dictionary. NOTE: You may need to do this with older documents which may have the dictionary pointing at the wrong direction. Also note that only dictionaries with this symbol next to it can be used by the spell checker: 

## Set document default file format.

OpenOffice defaults to the ODF format, which Microsoft Office cannot read. In order to set OpenOffice to default to the Microsoft formats, do the following:

1. Click Tools -> Options -> Load/Save -> General.
2. Under "Document Type" select "Text Document" and under "Always save as" select "Microsoft"
3. Do the same for "Spreadsheet" and "Presentation"
4. Click "OK". Done!

